#11 March/April 94
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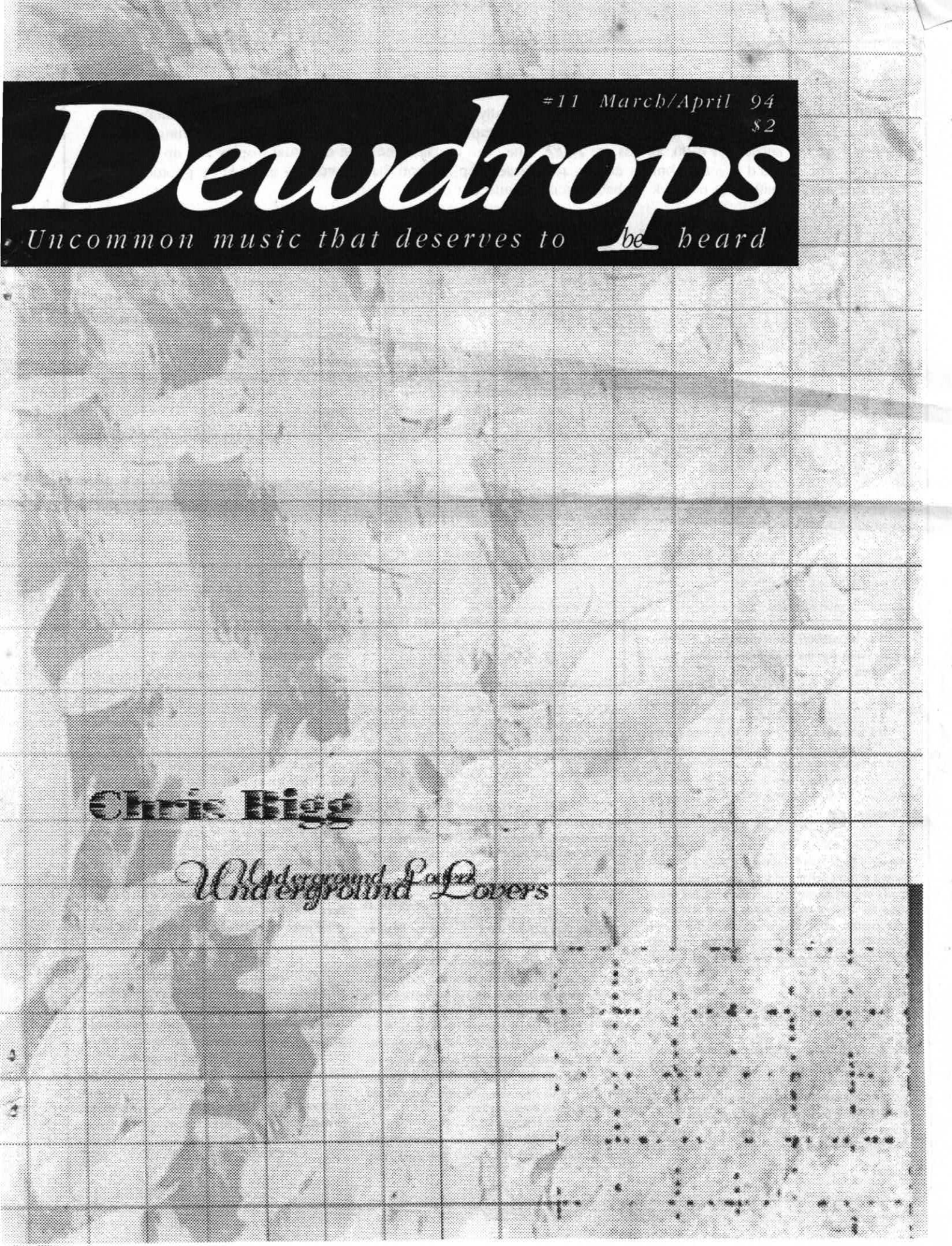
Dewdrops

Uncommon music that deserves to be heard



Chris Bigg

Underground Lazy Lovers

ADVERTISING

When talking about accepting advertising, we had originally come up with a price list that some of you might have seen or heard about. Recently we decided that our publication is really still too small to charge anything for ads. So until we get subscriber #300, all ads are ***FREE***. They can be classified style or actual display ads up to half a page in size. If you'd like to submit a display ad, please keep in mind that **Dewdrops** is made by photocopying and that images with a lot of black probably wouldn't turn out nice.

Presages Presages Presages Presages Presages

So much music, so little time... Boy have there been a lot of releases recently. Just when we thought that going to a bi-monthly format would ease some of the pressure, everything gets wild and whacky again! You may have heard that Dewdrops is real close to releasing our 2nd CD as Dewdrops Records. Orange's first album (self titled) will certainly be a feast for the ears. Unfortunately, all the hassles involved in getting an album out are not a feast for one's sanity (or one's pocketbook), so please bear with us as we get things together. We're going to keep the zine bi-monthly, even though it's a bit late this time. Perhaps there is another double-size (at no extra cost) issue in the offing.

Those into desktop publishing might find it interesting that with this issue we have completely changed over from Pagemaker to Quark Xpress, and as a result some things have been slightly redesigned. Anyone who has ever played with Page and Quark knows that this switch is both necessary and welcome!

We hope all of you got to see the Cocteau Twins this past month. They played some amazing shows and Dewdrops was there to witness it all — backstage, even! Those of you who were wondering if this was still partly a Cocteau Twins fanzine will be pleased to know that the next issue will more than make up for it. Dewdrops was given a chance to interview Robin Guthrie before their show in Claremont and to our great excitement he gave us an interview the likes of which has not been seen in any other publication so far. You won't want to miss it!

Also, special thanks to Eleanor Mannion for doing the inside graphics, art, and additional typesetting.

Brant Nelson
& Pat Mannion

Letters

I WAS WONDERING how many subscribers there are and what was the percentage of male to female subscribers.

Bill Hassink
Rouland Heights, CA

Glad you asked, because our back page for this issue features a map of the U.S. (and other countries) showing where our subscribers are. We also have some demographics tossed in as well. We hope this gives you an idea as to where you fit in among our subscribers.

IS THERE ANY HOPE for us, the gloomy dustpeople? I hope I am not dreaming when I read that there is a sort of revival of the dark or goth wave. I would be very happy if you could send any details about the kind of twilight music that is reviving in your country lately as well as about the Projekt record label which from what I learn here in Greece is to a large extent responsible for that goth revival.

Effie Politikou
Ano Glyfada, Greece

The dustpeople can finally arise from their graves and, thanks in part to Sam Rosenthal's brilliant **Projekt** label, the so-called gothic crowd can step out into the light of day and enjoy dark music without being labeled as pretentious anymore. With the help of Germany's **Hyperium Records**, this sort of music is almost becoming mainstream, at least in the indie crowd. But then again, is there a better (or less objectionable) crowd these days to be in? Dewdrops delights as well in these "dustpeople" bands and hope to continue providing the public with useful reviews of this genre's albums. Soon the lines will blur and no one will be able to tell dark from ambient from ethereal. And that day will be good!

COUNT THIS as another order for Thurtene, but also as a note of gratitude for Dewdrops. I really appreciate your efforts at chronicling the music that is becoming more and more a vital part of my life. Keep up the outstanding work.

Greg Schnippel
Chicago, IL

We are very excited about being on the forefront of music these days. Luckily for those of us who enjoy this sort of music, there are numerous publications that serve to inform us about the indie scene. Though we've all heard of the big mags like Option and Alternative Press, it is also important to know about the many fanzines that exist. On page 8, we have included a list of many of the fine zines that we have seen. Hopefully it will give you all some idea as to what else lies out there. Remember, every zine specializes in its own brand of music, so you can never completely count any one out.

FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS now, I've been interested in the direction of London's **Too Pure** label. Are you? So far, they remind me of **4AD** more than any other label in my awareness. The Too Pure artists seem to share a common attitude, yet each band s doing its own thing musically. Perhaps you may want to cover them if you are not already.

Matthew Keller
Tampa, FL

We've been hearing many good things about the Too Pure label as well, so we contacted them and they kind of dubbed us the unnoficially official L.A. interns for the label (which basically amounts to checking around at local record stores to see if they've sold out of Too Pure albums. Besides **Seefeel** (reviewed this issue), the label has released material by **P.J. Harvey, Th' Faith Healers** and **Moonshake**. We shall all definitely be hearing more from this label, which, curiously enough, shares office space with 4AD's London branch. Small world, isn't it?

I WOULD LIKE to express my gratitude for your efforts with the "Dewdrops," being generally disgusted with the style and scope of U.S. music press. I have came from Russia for grad study one-and-a-half years ago and find myself drowning in the huge stream of information. In Russia, progressive rock is still very big. [And] now to my delight, they have some Cocteau and DCD albums out in Latvia and you can find Bel Canto CDs in Moscow (prices are dreadful, though). Anyway... I found that I like most

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

4AD

1994 so far...

BAD 4001	Kristin Hersh *Your Ghost*
CAD 4002	Kristin Hersh *Hips and Makers*
BAD 4003	Lisa Germano *The Inconsiderate Bitch*
BAD 4004	Red House Painters *Shock Me*
CAD 4005	Lisa Germano *Happiness*
BAD 4006	Kristin Hersh *Strings*
TU7	Insides — *Clear Skin*

past releases to check off

CAD 3008	Red House Painters *Red House Painters*
CAD 3009	Heidi Berry - *Heidi Berry*
BAD 3010	Heidi Berry - *The Moon And The Sun*
CAD 3011	The Breeders - *Cannonball*
CAD 3012	Unrest - *Perfect Teeth*
DAD 3013	Dead Can Dance *Into the Labyrinth*
CAD 3014	The Breeders - *Last Splash*
BAD 3015	Unrest - *Cath Carroll*
CAD 3016	Red House Painters *Red House Painters*
BAD 3017	The Breeders *Divine Hammer*
CAD 3018	The Glee Club *Mine*
GU4	Insides - *Euphoria*
GU4S (7")	"Further Distractions" / "Turning Absentmindedly"
GU5	Spoonfed Hybrid *Spoonfed Hybrid*
GU5S (7")	"Bullets and Bees" / "Messrs. Hyde"
GU6	That Dog. - *That Dog.*
GU6S (7")	"Buy Me Flowers", "Untitled"

NEWS

June 14	Lush *Split*
August 30	Pale Saints album
September	4AD US event
Fall	Kendra Smith album
October	The Wolfgang Press album
later	Brendan Perry album

Coming up the last week in September, 4AD is presenting a complement to last year's 13 Year Itch birthday celebration. It's going to be held in Los Angeles as part of the UK/LA celebration, and it will feature several performances by 4AD artists in acoustic and electric settings. Confirmed so far are **Lisa Gerrard, Michael Brook,** and **Throwing Muses**. There will also be a limited edition CD released to commemorate the event. Also scheduled is the world premier of the **Dead Can Dance** video *Live At The Mayfair*, shot last year in 70mm by Mark Magidson at two private performances at the Mayfair Theater in Santa Monica, CA. More details will be reported here as they become available.

(4AD press release) Kendra Smith has signed to 4AD worldwide. She has begun recording her first solo disc for the label, slated for release in early fall. She currently has ten songs in demo form, with plans to segue the tracks together via soundcollage. The disc's instrumentation will be centered around an antique pump organ and will implement a wide scope of instruments such as violin, Turkish drums and Indian harmonium. "And of course, the distorgan, fuzz guitar and bass, three of my favorite traditional instruments," says Kendra. "So far, the music ranges from twisted classical to organic electric pop, but I make no predictions. The random factor is part of the plan."

Kendra originally achieved critical acclaim as founding member of Los Angeles based outfits **The Dream Syndicate, Clay Allison** and **Opal**. After her exit from the latter, she departed from the urban grind of Los Angeles, feeling the need to get out of the system and reassess what was truly necessary. Subsequently, Kendra now prefers to live in the woods without modern conveniences. Her way of life is "primitive and can be physically and 'psychically' demanding," says Kendra, "but it's satisfying to me. There are many opportunities to study nature and conduct scientific experiments. I know enough of humans already..."

However, Kendra's break from music was ended on a Northern California road-trip when she discovered an old pump organ in a dusty shop corner. "I touched it once and knew it would open musical doors for me, I began to consider recording again." Then in 1992, Kendra officially returned by releasing "The Guild of Temporal Adventurers" EP (Fiasco). The disc displayed Kendra's penchant for beautiful melodies and as a result, ended up on many year-end Top 10 Lists.

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of the stuff you seem to like. Here are some thoughts:

1) The reviews are delightfully rich and unrepetetive!! I especially adore the balance between the more passionate [reviews] (*Pat's*) and the chilled *Brant's*. Seriously, I learn more English, literary English, from Dewdrops than from TV and papers taken together!

2) The layouts may take you a lot of time, [so] spend more time on the texts please.

3) The 4AD background [page #3] is a little too dark, making it hard to read.

4) Please, include your photos sometime!

5) What do you think about the **Cranes**, **Curve**, etc. (non-4AD and not that obscure)?

6) The motto "Uncommon music..." is great. Now I do not have hard times describing to my friends the kind of music I like.

7) Thank you for "Flan"!! It literally resurrected my belief in the modern American literature!

8) Please include record labels' phone numbers also if you have them.

Thank you for all you do again! I am really moved with how much you input personally into this project.

Igor Boronenkov
Madison, WI

Boy, it really feels great to get so many overseas and pseudo-overseas letters. Hopefully there are a couple issues of Dewdrops floating around somewhere in Russia. Let's have some answers:

1) Am I really the passionate one when it comes to reviewing? I suppose it depends on which band I'm reviewing. Brant can be equally passionate, especially when reviewing the more ethereal albums.

2) As you may have noticed, we definitely are focusing more on the text and trying to get the issues out on time. Great art has been relegated to the front cover (except for my wife's tidbits) and to the CDs that we are releasing.

3) We are fixing that little problem with the 4AD logo.

4) We actually *did* put our photos on the back page of issue #6. Unfortunately, they didn't come out all that well. We will do it again soon!

5) The "non-4AD and not that obscure" bands are just as good as many of the indie bands. **Cranes** are great and so is **Curve**, but we tend to only review releases that aren't so prevalent in the bigger magazines.

6) We like it, too. We just hope nobody gets disenchanted with us when we review odd bands like **Dogbowl** and **Ween**.

7) Glad you liked "Flan." Now if only everybody had a copy of "Flan," the world would be a weirder place.

8) Sadly, it is not wise to publish every label's phone number. If we did that, smaller labels would be inundated with hundreds of phone calls and plead for us to retract the phone number. Really, writing a letter works just as well.

Dewdrops is a fanzine published from the homes of Brant Nelson and Pat Mannion. It has no official connection to any record label, except our own. All text has been written by us, unless otherwise noted. Issues are printed bi-monthly and subscriptions may be had for $9. Back issues are are available starting with issue #3 for $1.35 each, except for #s 3 & 8 which are $2.50 each. Send all correspondence to Dewdrops, 1817 Corinth Ave. #10, Los Angeles, CA 90025-5567. Or call (310) 477-8551 with any questions.

All releases are rated on an 11 point scale and there are two reviews for every release. Exceptions are for compilations for which we include a single review and no rating, and demo tapes which we rate on a 3 "point" scale (sign, consider, avoid). All addresses are listed on page 12, and if you can't find a particular item in your local music store, chances are you can order it directly from the label.

Strongly Recommended

Release	*Score*
Cocteau Twins - Bluebeard	20
Medicine - The Buried Life	20
Seefeel - Quique	20
Egomaniacs - Egomaniacs	19
Hover - My Tea Is Gone	19
Scenic - The Kelso Run	19
St. Christopher - single	19
Stoa - Urthona	18
Aenone - Saints and Razors	17
Grenadine - Don't Forget The Halo	17
Lotion - Tear	17
Kristin Hersh - Hips and Makers	16

Big Hat

Selena At My Window

Big Hat sounds like what you might expect if **Tel Basta** and **Eden** joined forces and got **Siouxsie** to sing for them, but to be fair, Big Hat has a charm all their own. There's almost more kinds of percussion than you can imagine, and the other instruments are always on the exotic side: violins, harpsichord, flutes. In fact, a recent review had them not playing any guitars at all, and it's true – none are credited. Before you start thinking that these guys must be like **Dead Can Dance**, let me explode that comparison. Big Hat's craft is much more punchy and raucous which is evident from the very start. Yvonne Brunner can belt out the cherry-coated knife edge vocals of Siouxsie as effectively as she cajoles forth an effusively blissful style like Sonya Waters. "Selena" is really wonderful– the first half combining a fog of noise, electric violin, congas, and a distant mechanical rhythm, then a break to a grooving dance beat and a spine tickling chant-chorus. "Pocketful" alternates between ethereal ambience with a hammer dulcimer and an angry pounding chorus. There's an overall Renaissance feeling with this one. This changes to all together on "The Indian Song," which will have you craving for some vindaloo (don't forget the lager, though). [see also issues 4 and 5] 8 lilies — bn

Big Hat frolics in the back woods of musical terrain. They have the power to lull you in with flowing violins and a siren's bittersweet voice just as they are clamping the chains on your feet. Their use of percussion and xylophonic sounds entreats the listener to imagine they're in a faux-Medieval set on some episode of "Star Trek," where inventive musicians concoct a futuristic version of 16th century music. The album goes from hypnotic to caterwaul and then back to fairy lands again, with Yvonne Bruner's charming voice leading the way.

"Stranger Than You" has a dash of **Siouxsie**, a bit of **Kate Bush**, and a healthy dose of **Dead Can Dance**. "Pocketful" features **Shelleyan**-voice that almost spills over into pretension-land except for the Siouxsie bits, and has the wistful charm of **Boingo**'s "The Last Time" (from **Elfman**'s *So-Lo* album). "Selena," the title track, has touches of **Hugo Largo** violins and intense percussion with lots of clicking & clacking wood instruments. "Huge Blue Gum Tree" has xylophone-keyboards and cello (actually, it's a 5-string electric violin, but it sounds just like a cello) while "Inamorata" gets into a fair bit of sexy **Bjork** squealing. "Wired" gets back into more of the medieval frolicking and finds Yvonne sounding much like Kate Bush. "Dirty Old Dog" begins with some very odd sound effects and then conducts an experiment in sparseness, rather like Japanese, minimalist opera with a faint touch of some 60s ballad that I can't quite put my finger on... All in all, a very powerful album. 7 lilies — pm

Egomaniacs

Egomaniacs

The Egomaniacs are not merely the latest incarnation of Kim Fahy's (of the **Mabuses**) god-sent, lyrical music. They aren't even the last stop on Kramer's whistle-stop journey to collaborate with every musician in the world. They may not even realize that they've made an album. It barely trundles along on the outskirts of your listening consciousness as you puzzle as to how an entire album has gone by in a mere 37 minutes.

The Egomaniacs are in fact the purest form of nonchalant, zero-edge, wistful music to be heard anywhere on this planet Earth. It's like the kind of music that you'd imagine the **Beatles** would have made after a 12-hour boxcar ride and no sleep. Gentle, harmless, rambling, speedy, then slow, then speedy, never taking its eye off the sign on the studio wall that reads: WE ARE CREATING TIMELESS MUSIC! DON'T PANIC!

The first track, "Cancerman," exhibits more than just a touch of sadness with its sing-song melodies and back-of-the-mind jangliness. "I Am Rolling" bursts into a very, very *Flan*-ish instrumentation, but is followed by a pure dose of Mabuse-ish, rambling guitars on "Your Sister." "From Nebraska" demonstrates the band's love affair with harmonious, hip moog. Even the godhead instrumental "Redline," can ramble on with the spirits of a drunken, jazzy **Dif Juz.** And then the fourteenth (and final) track, "Kiss Your Wallet," explodes with the jangling non-intensity that you will love the Egomaniacs for. It is an encore-worthy, leaves-you-smiling-and-wanting-more number with all the zany keyboards, rambling guitars and snappy drums that these boys can muster. One can live on this music alone. 10 lilies — pm

The Egomaniacs are Kim Fahy (**The Mabuses**), Jamie Harley and Shimmy Disc head guy, **Kramer**, but you can just as easily think of this as something very close to another Mabuses album. After all, Kim wrote nearly everything, sings and plays guitar. And it's all great. Kim has an immediately recognizable voice and en equally distinctive guitar style, sort of a crystalline playful twang. The best songs also share this playfulness that veers close to **Dogbowl** but doesn't get as wacky. "Heavenly Bent" could almost come from Tennessee complete with all the required knee-slapping and toe-tapping. It's an exceptionally fun tune. Warped country music (sort of) defines "From Nebraska" with a jazzy rhythm and all the cheesy organ you could ever want, reaching a musical equivalent of the vocals. "Indeed, This Is The Creep" skips and shuffles along to more jazziness and just a bit of 60's feel-good psychedelia. "The Pebbles" is a stoned out acid rock jam mainly fueled by organ and dark bass. The best is saved for last; "Kiss Your Wallet" has got some great rhythm guitar and a snare beat like a drum and bugle corps presentation. Then the chorus oddly adds flutes, casting in stone why Kim Fahy is so good at what he does. The melodies are involved and memorable, unusual and frolicking. I think one taste of this or the Mabuses album (see #7) and you'll be back for more. 9 lilies — bn

GodStar

Sleeper

taang!

Godstar is a group from Australia that includes the **Lemonheads**' bassist Nic. Their debut album is a large dose of lightweight fun with lots of happy summery popsongs and maybe **Belly** as a reference point. It's nothing you haven't heard before, but don't let that prevent you from enjoying several well crafted songs. "Ersatz," "Bad Bad Implications" and "Lie Down Forever" are particularly good with strong melodies and slightly jangle-noise guitar. Sleeper fills a void in my musical tastes, a small

one, but a void nonetheless and I'll welcome it back on occasion. 6 lilies — bn

I didn't like these guys the first time I heard this album. After several listens, I found myself singing along. What the heck am I doing? Do I actually like this stuff? Well, it's not bad for what it is, and it does have a bit of jangle to it. It's got catchy, male vocals (Nik Dalton) and brutally cool drums (Alison Galloway), with competently grunged guitars (Tom Morgan). Evan Dando (of the **Lemonheads**) even steps in on drums for a couple tracks. It's a very full sound — very "do-it-yourself," which is not surprising considering they're on the same label as the original D.I.Y. band, the **Swirlies**.

Highlights include "Ersatz," a frantic, twangy guitar number, with punk-girly vocals (Alison singing). "Bad Bad Implications," complete with **Sonic Youth** (or **Pixies**) vocals bordering on the **Elvis Costello**-ey, and more scrungy punk music. "The Brightest Star" gets real close to **Unrest**, complete with jangle-master guitars and 60s vocals. No doubt, you will see these folks on the college charts soon. 6 lilies — pm

Kristin Hersh
Hips And Makers
4AD

I really didn't think I'd be saying this, but "I love the new Kristin Hersh album!" After the travesty that was *Red Heaven*, we all wondered if that was to be the end of **Throwing Muses**. That album was singular in its uninspiredness. But here we have Kristin's new solo album, and it is singularly beautiful! She manages to do wonders with only a guitar, piano and cello. Wow! I dare any other band to make an enjoyable album with such minimal instrumentation. Kristin apparently plays both acoustic guitar and piano while Jane Scarpantoni adds a gentle undercoat of cello to most of the tracks. It is slow-paced, with moments of wild abandonment. It is calm and soothing like staring at old pictures of farmhouses. It's comforting in a delicate, rustic sort of way.

"Your Ghost" is slow, catchy and charming. **Michael Stipe**'s backing vocals really put this song over the top. "Beestung" is a simple melody for piano and cello which becomes a soothing lullaby when Kristin's hoarse purring is added. "Teeth" features Kristin's manic alternation between hoarse monochanting and screeching near-falsetto. "Sundrops" is a classic, feisty Muses track with speedy guitar, and Kristin sounding nearly identical to **Shelleyan Orphan's** Caroline Crawley. "Spooky" is a short and pretty instrumental. "Houdini Blues" gets a bit repetitive, but its **Hugo Largo**-ness redeems it in the end. "A Loon" makes you want to say, "All hail Kristin's whining and warbling vocals!" Kristin breaks into the voice that we loved on early Throwing Muses albums. That wild, unkempt voice fades out towards the end of the track to let Kristin practice the other end of her spectrum: beautiful, gentle crooning. "Velvet Days" is one of the slow, charming ones. Kristin's voice has this amazing ability to lilt sideways in a way that can only be described as heart-twisting. "Close Your Eyes" gets back to more whining. Not as much warble, but a very cool song. "Me and My Charms" is a slow-then-fast, bitter-then-sad lament. "Tuesday Night" is sparse and melancholy, the only version of Kristin's voice that doesn't appeal to me. "The Letter" is a frightening jumble of thoughts (spooky stuff!) and jangling guitar work. "Lurch" is another tiny instrumental. "Cuckoo" is somewhat forgettable. "Hips and Makers" is the title/last track: simple and cute. Actually, simple and cute describes the whole album perfectly. The best damn simple and cute album you've ever heard, mind you! 10 lilies — pm

Is *Hips and Makers* another in a series of unsatisfying 4AD releases or a compelling and disturbingly beautiful work by that voice that some of us have come to love? It all depends on whether you love Kristin Hersh's vocals. Unfortunately, I do not. The majority of this album leaves me feeling annoyed or bored. Entirely acoustic, the songs are occasionally fleshed out with cello, notably on the single "Your Ghost" and the wonderful "Sundrops" which has a manic kind of strumming to it on both cello and guitar. "Velvet Days" is also very pretty and charming. If only there were more songs like these. Instead, Kristin wails a slap in the face on "A Loon." Maybe some of you like it when she does this (see also "Take" from *Hunkpapa* and the terribly annoying "Delicate Cutters" from **Throwing Muses**), claiming disturbing lyrics or somesuch. But I'll pass. True, most aren't that bad, but the songs just don't get to me. There's power and emotion I don't feel or even have references in my life to, and instead I wonder what I could be missing. It's probably the same thing I miss with Throwing Muses, but I will keep trying to figure it out. 6 lilies — bn

Medicine
The Buried Life
american

For Medicine, first and foremost there is high-pitched noise. All treble, no bass. Is this a good thing? Well, HELL YES! This is truly a wonderful and remarkable album for that very reason. This is also what tends to set them apart from other noisemeisters like **My Bloody Valentine**, whose main weapon has become tremelo and guitar loops. "The Buried Life" just oozes noise nicely set against the sweet vocals from both Brad Laner and Beth Thompson (Independent Project Records junkies may be surprised to learn that Brad came from **Savage Republic** and Beth from **Fourwaycross**). "The Pink" couldn't have been a better choice to begin the album: a syrupy melody and charming vocals with a seething, rapid-switch guitar layer. Nothing like jumping right in! A barrage of atonality welcomes you to "Babydoll," later breaking away to a reckless blustering chorus. If you're not completely into it by now, give up. Beth's vocals come to the forefront in "She Knows Everything." It's a dancey, kinda funky tune, with just an ominous and creepy intro. As soon as "Never Click" bursts out, it's surely one of Pat's "moments when time stops." The last time I felt like this was right after MBV's "When You Sleep" started. Talk about an overwhelming cacophony and ants running down your back! Beth gives a lesson in sensuality and sultry vocals during "Fried Awake" which also has the distinction of being one of the least noisy tracks (which still means plenty of sound). Who'd have thought that making the bridge part of a song sound like sawing sheet metal would work? That's what happens in "Beneath The Sands," which also includes some great cheesy farfisa organ mumbles (which is probably more guitar effects). After "Emmeline" you'll be thinking, "Is there no escape from noise?" especially since there is no real music at all on this track, just lots of clanking, sawing sheet metal again, a shortwave radio being tuned, toads chirping and a cat purring. "I Hear" sounds just like a sunburn— searing heat you can't get away from, and a droopy/sweaty rhythm. There's even real violin and cello adding alternately a sorrowful and uplifting feel. After that workout, "Live It Down" is a cold drink of piano and strings, quiet at first, but then chugging along to the stormsound that you have either fallen in love with or despise by now. I'm solidly in the first category, as if you haven't guessed. For the adventuresome, there are six more minutes starting with a minute of silence at the CD's close. Minus all the noise, much of *The Buried Life* would be called pop songs— upbeat, cheerful, even a little mindless —but it's the fact that everything is so drenched with sound that makes this album much more. 10 lilies — bn

Medicine lets loose with everything and when it's over, you know you've been hit with nothing less than a ton of bricks in the shape of Beth Thompson's crooning, siren-like voice. Guitars assault you with nearly every effects knob turned to eleven. Nothing on this planet even comes close. Band members Jim Goodall (drums), Brad Laner (guitar) and He Goak (bass) take a studio full of processing equipment to their instruments with

maniac abandon, never letting you pause for even so much as a breath. When the guitars stop, the noise takes over. The kind of noise that makes **My Bloody Valentine** shiver and wet their pants. At times, Beth's voice sounds like there is a large, electric fan stuck between her and the microphone. The rest of the time, she is indiscernible from honey itself.

"The Pink" feeds us buzz-warped, noise-laden guitars that whine while Beth sings her heart out. "Babylon" is in-your-face wall-of-everything, like a chart-topping alternative hit sent through a tree-grinder. "Slut" features grinding and whining guitars, half-malevolent percussion, squealing, chirping effects and Beth's husky crooning. "She Knows Everything" drips with non-stop wavertone, but finally everything gives way to a piercingly painful screechy-saw noise that brings the song to a close. "Something Goes Wrong" erupts with lots of cymbals and drumming. "Never Click" delves into noise overdose, lots of clanging and screeching guitar, giving Brad a chance to sing. "Fried Awake" bears an amazing resemblance to **Indian Bingo** in its chord changes, but the rest is pure, heavenly Beth-voice, layered over herself and spread out across a sheet of shimmery guitar pools. If you only hear one track, then this is the godhead one you must hear! "Beneath the Sands" is nigh-girly-pop, but it also goes so far into the realm of the painfully noise-driven that your ears can only hold on tight and enjoy their final moments. "Emmeline" is an instrumental, if you can call it that. Perhaps it's more like hammering, sawing and drilling on a live amplifier. "I Hear" is full of whining noise and leaden, wavering Beth-voice. "Live It Down" is very pretty, with more buzz-sawing and crooning. The last track, "The Earth is Soft and White" is another "instrumental," though "7.5 minutes of a metallic hardware house of horror" might describe it better. It is at this point that your jaw drops and you say, "Whoa! Let's hear that again!" 10 lilies — pm

Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares
Melody Rhythm & Harmony

Try as I might, I cannot bring myself to describe this act as anything other than simply "annoying." It wallows in annoyance, 31 tracks of it.

But to be fair, it is a bunch of lovely ladies with beautiful voices. The music is charmingly European, and it isn't heavy metal. Unfortunately, this chanting an yelping in unison grows very old very fast and I can do nothing better than give it a quick death. 2 lilies — pm

Late last year, Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares went on their second tour of the US, and I happened to see them with several friends in a church. It was an utterly magical performance which I count among the top five I've ever seen. For those who have never heard the Bulgarian choral style, the closest I can compare it to is what Lisa Gerrard does in **Dead Can Dance**: very powerful, almost unearthly tones and melodies with a middle eastern tonality and scale. Somehow the Bulgarian Voices sound even more heavenly and just completely unlike anything we in the West are used to hearing. One of the most amazing things about the concert was the apparently effortless control the 24 women had on the timing and especially the volume of what they were singing. The rhythm is often odd, very far from anything like 4/4, and oh the voices! They all have a sort of airy, childlike, high pitched timbre, and the melodies and harmonies they create are simply some of the most beautiful things I've ever heard. Absolutely stunning. The choir, masterfully led by Vania Moneva has officially taken the name Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares and has become Bulgaria's leading female vocal group. Two archival albums with the Voix Bulgares name but a different group of women were released on 4AD in the mid-80's and were later released domestically when the rest of the world started to catch on. This two CD set here is an entire live performance, almost the same one we saw in Los Angeles, recorded in March 1993 in Trondheim, Norway. The sound is crystal clear, perfectly capturing the riveting experience, and listened to with headphones, the whole thing at times becomes almost too potent as when the whole group reaches peak intensity (again, think of Lisa's vocals on "Ocean"). The audience obviously thought so too for there are several places, songs that end with an exquisitely orchestrated soft fade of all the voices simultaneously that there's a pause as if the crowd were afraid to applaud, to follow such a moment of perfection with something as banal as clapping. The power and excellence these singers exhibit is something that everyone should experience, and this album makes it possible. 11 lilies — bn

Seefeel
Quique

I'll just go out on a rather solid limb and say that **Philip Glass** would probably like this album. A lot. If that's got you thinking "repetitive," then you've understood. It's also no secret that Robin Guthrie of the **Cocteau Twins** thinks they're incredible. If this isn't one of the strongest recommendations you've heard recently and you still aren't convinced you should hear ***Quique***, then read further. Seefeel's craft involves weaving a tapestry of repetitive elements and then tweaking and pulling it here and there to vary it slightly with each measure. Elements are added, taken away, and mutated to create a rich and very complex soundscape of electronic mantras. Despite what I've just said, each song is definitely repetitive enough to be called hypnotic or trance-inducing, which some probably will dismiss as "it's just the same thing repeated over and over." One of my favorites is "Imperial" which has a swirling/burbling electronic background the equivalent of a fast moving brook, upon the banks of which festoons of spray periodically wash up. There's enough here to keep one's mind reeling and spinning, even if, like it's neighbors, the track spans over six minutes. A few vocals come through as on "Plainsong," where Sarah Peacock's "the one thing" gets added again and again, and again, to a quick drum machine program and clockwork pulsing of guitar sequences. Another great one, "Industrious" has a wonderfully dancey groove provided on bass guitar backed by distant electro-percussion and a constant, solid drone. Other drones sing out a blissful melody and Sarah coos quietly. For a simpler offering they let us into "Charlotte's Mouth" which is all thin airy guitar and a calmer bass-drums rhythm. It's minor keyed and therefore eerie. "Through You" could be an excellent underwater soundtrack. Muted drum echoes, sparse electro-bleeps and majestic trumpet-sounding guitars abound evoking the creeps once again. "Filter Dub" strongly reminds me of that long spooky track from **The Field Mice**'s *For Keeps*, with another funky-lazy bassline and some slide guitar. ***Quique*** comes across the best in one sitting, listening and marveling straight through, at least until you've figured out what the different tracks are. Currently the album is import only, but a domestic release is imminent. As soon as that happens, it will be a happy time indeed. 10 lilies — bn

A friend of mine once thought up an idea for a futuristic type of music. He imagined what tomorrow's technology and trends might create and came up with something called "micromonics," which he described as "a hypnotic, endlessly fascinating musical experience that continues to expand in complexity like an inquiry into fractal geometry.." Of course he was describing the music of 20-some years from now, whereas Seefeel's ***Quique*** is right here, right now. 64 minutes of mind-altering noise.

Mark Clifford creates the guitar samples and rhythm treatments. Sarah Peacock is credited with "vocals," though it should *also* read "vocal treatments," because there are no words, no syllables, nothing to anchor it to any known form of speech. Daren Seymour plays bass and radio (of course), and Justin Fletcher does percussion and rhythm programming. I picture it this way:

the band steps into an air-tight, acoustically sealed room where they approach their instruments and on the count of three, simultaneously touch their over-amplified, triple-miked, effect-a-mundoed gear and, almost as suddenly, they dash off to a shielded control room where they ever-so-gently adjust knobs and move sliders during the course of each track. Yes, I envision a row of musicians, all clad in white environmental suits with electro-static gloves and eyes glazed over like pool cues.

The way these tracks blend into one another, it is relatively impossible to evaluate them separately. Perhaps some appropriately chosen adjectives and nouns will suffice (one set for each track, in order):

1-angelic oscillations
2-tribal mesmerism
3-starbound bagpipes
4-infinite moog
5-joyous recursivity
6-shimmering mausoleum
7-squeaky echoes
8-swirling ghosts
9-thumping heart

If you've ever heard anything by Alan Wilder's **Recoil**, then you've pretty much heard Seefeel, though I'd wager that *Quique* is far less pretentious. 10 lilies — pm

Soul Whirling Somewhere

projekt

Eating The Sea

If it weren't for tracks 3, 5 and 7, the whole album would flow by unnoticed. The songs are all very similar. In fact, it seems like all the even tracks can be described in exactly the same words: "languorous vocals swim in and out of a majestic synth arrangement."

As far as the other tracks: "One of These Days" is a flowing synth instrumental, very much like taking your moog to the beach. "You'll Tear Me Away from You" consists of wistful vocals, very happy and yet sad at the same time. "Drained" is very slow and very pretty, with surprisingly gorgeous melodramatic **Depeche Mode**-ish chord sweeps throughout. "I Dream We Are Blind" features jangley guitars(!), making the song surprisingly hummable and quite beautiful. "Landed" is pretty and sparse. And then there are the last two tracks, which must have gotten switched because "Swimmer in a Well" is an odd numbered track that is more of the majestic synth stuff, whereas "Fightless" is a whining guitar instrumental. I can't deny, however, that this is yet another pretty album and a check in the plus column for Projekt Records. 6 lilies — pm

Eating The Sea is one of those albums to drift away with, on endless waves across opalescent seas. Great washes of orchestral synthesizer take you there. Nothing could be lovelier than "One Of These Days Some Eyes Will Be Opened" and if you're a 4AD fan then you'll be sure to recall *Sleeps With The Fishes* or the mellower instrumental moments of **This Mortal Coil**. Sparkly acoustic guitar and a melancholy male voice join the solemn atmosphere in "Not Breathing." Percussion is added on "You'll Tear Me Away From You" making a very satisfying piece of loneliness, while "Wish" creates the impression of a soaring hymn. "Drained" sounds just like **Eden** from all the varied percussion. A haunting little melody will really get to you on "Flightless" making you a bit misty-eyed with all its gorgeousness. Then it outdoes itself by including a quietly humming electric guitar at the end. This is a beautifully dark and moody, and ultimately uplifting album. Plus the insert has some remarkable abstract photography in wonderful shades of blue, which you can also get as a poster from Projekt. 9 lilies — bn

Stoa

Urthona

HYPERIUM

Stoa bring back some of the gothic feelings from Dead Can Dance's Within The Realm Of A Dying Sun in a completely electronic form which is quite effective. Synth-string washes are commonplace and most of the songs have elements of classical music, no matter that all of was produced by keyboards. A grand moment "Candide" gives way to a less forbodeing waltzing number with choir-like female vocals and plucked strings. "Spin" has cello and harpsichord sounds creating a lamentful though soothing mood. In others like "In Memoriam" their style is more like Clan Of Xymox, in this case with a heavily accented male voice. More opera voice and the most gothicness yet comes through in "Captivity." There's much to explore here like an old castle, and Stoa makes the discovery delightful. 9 lilies — bn

There is a haunting beauty which weaves throughout Stoa's graceful compositions. Their music takes you on a trip down mammoth staircases and through giant, Florentine archways. It is the kind of music that must run through Gregorian monks' heads when they suppress the urge to hum along with the ancient melodies that cathedrals incite in your mind. Stoa memorialize the passing of eons with their flowing synthwork and majestic tympani. And all the while, a gentle female's voice drifts through the air just by your side.

Anyone who enjoyed the early works of **In the Nursery** will hear much of their influences on *Urthona*." "Candide" is quite ITN-ish, a striking and beautiful instrumental. "Autumn" is a haunting frenzy of plucked violin strings and stirring synth arpeggios, with flowing female voice. "Infant Joy" is a track from the Hyperium sampler reviewed last issue, and still quite beautiful. "Spin" is a very beautiful and autumnal piece of synthwork, full of those grand electronic string-swaths that made **Art of Noise** famous. "In Memoriam" is an upbeat, sparkling harpsichord number, with a low, male voice that adds a dark, yet peppy edge. "Stoa" starts with an intro of rain, which gives way to an operatic masterpiece that would make **Michael Nyman** ("Prospero's Books") ecstatic. "Captivity" combines gorgeous tympani and operatic voice with more dreamy synth. "Dust" is filled with spooky orchestration and those low, male vocals to add the **PM™** touch. "[N]ever" layers madrigal voice over gentle synth and horns. "Taumel" is simply an airy female opera bit. And "Hommage" begins with a graceful piano solo that builds in intensity til you can't resist joining in and then ends abruptly. Stoa reminds us that Hyperium Records is the next driving force in beautiful music. 9 lilies — pm

That Dog

That Dog

Guernica

Just when you think you've got ol' Ivo figured out, he does something like signing local L.A. band That Dog. Call me reactionary, but when I hear hard core punk guitars and heavy, thrashing drums I tend *not* to think of 4AD. But, after all the smoke has cleared, one can only see the brilliance of Mr. Watts-Russel for miles and miles (of course, now that he's moved to L.A., you can only see for half a mile or so).

That Dog step out onto that imaginary stage and tear down the house with a wall of punk thrashing, step off stage, and then sneak back in the other door wearing all the trappings of the soft-hearted, fem-voiced exotic band you'd normally expect from 4AD.

"Old Timer" kicks it right off with crunchy bass and grungey guitars. The vocals are more-or-less your typical girly-rock, but unlike most girl bands, these vocals can really entrance you. Tracks like "Jump" demonstrate how soft Anna Waronker's voice can actually get. The instruments inherit a completely **Hugo Largo** sound while Anna croons from a low place all the way to those high places that you only thought **Liz Frazer** could get to. Each and every track features thick helpings of violin, which goes a long way towards this Hugo comparison. Anna and another vocalist (Petra or Rachel Haden) can do this double-voice harmony thing that makes your hair stand on end and your eyes bug out,

it's so good! Tracks like "Raina," "Jump," "Family Functions," "Punk Rock Girl" and "She Looks at Me" showcase this amazing vocal feat better than any of the other songs. On tracks like "She," you'd swear this was a **Simon and Garfunkel**, all-female tribute album. Somehow, That Dog has mastered the art of 70s incense and peppermint. And you'd never guess these gals were from L.A., what with "Westside Angst," a song which laments the passing of all that was cool in West L.A. (the "213" area code changing to "310, the death of KMET, the lack of Ships restaurants, cable channel "musical chairs," etc.). And then there's "Paid Programming," which proves that they must stay up late watching TV while writing their songs. It's a beautiful little lullaby about those wonderful infomercials and, well, it's very funny. Then they finish off with "This Boy." I don't recall the last time a song made me want to start a slam pit in my own house, but this song has that effect. Something tells me this band would be awesome live. Quite possibly, That Dog is the missing link between Hugo Largo and **Black Flag**. 8 lilies — pm

Released by Geffen in the US, That Dog is a schizoid band if ever there was one. On one half of their brains lies the motivation to pound and crunch out classic 2-minute punk jams, and on the other lies a desire for the three girl vocalists to combine their voices into a beautiful harmony for more blissful areas often with violin accompaniment. Some songs mix these two extremes. The pretty songs are the best: "She Looks At Me," "Punk Rock Girl," "Jump" and "Raina," which has the best vocal moment yet this year near the end. A few of the songs are amusing slices of banality: "Westside Angst" deals with changing telephone area codes and cable channel numbers in West Los Angeles, while "Paid Programming" follows late night TV drek. When they're raunchy, they're kinda fun too. "Old Timer" combines grinding power chords with segments of thrash, and "Angel" which starts out nice becomes menacing with creeping guitar and manic violin. It will be interesting to see where this band goes. 7 lilies — bn

Hector Zazou
Sahara Blue

MADE TO MEASURE
CRAMMED

This is an album based on Arthur Rimbaud's poems. It's got an all star cast with among others **Ryuichi Sakamoto**, **Anneli Drecker (Bel Canto)**, **David Sylvian**, and **Brendan Perry** and **Lisa Gerrard (Dead Can Dance)**. Maybe if I was an English major and/or had any idea who Rimbaud was I might like this better. But except for the two Perry and Gerrard tracks which are the usual Dead Can Dance fare, and a nice vocalist (**Barbara Condon**) on a couple others, what I find here is just mind numbingly dull. I'm sure it's fine if you like this kind of thing – sparsely arranged new age/jazzy/easy listening music, now and then backed by spoken word poetry readings, more often sounding like normal songs – but it all seems a bit, I don't know, pointless, I guess. Anything at all describing what exactly this CD is commemorating would have been nice, with maybe a short bio on Rimbaud. It certainly doesn't live up to the rave review or two posted on 4AD-L. 4 lilies — bn

An odd assortment of songs which are apparently based on the poems of one Arthur Rimbaud. The album is rather sporadic, with amazing parts and also some parts that just sort of sit there. **Dead Can Dance** fans will want this album just to hear Brendan Perry and Lisa Gerrard on the tracks "Youth" and "Black Stream." **Ryuichi Sakamoto** fans will buy it because of the four tracks that he plays piano on. **Velvet Underground** fans will want to hear John Cale's vocals on a couple songs. Likewise, **Keith Leblanc** and **Japan**'s David Sylvian and will no doubt garner even more interest. But more about Dead Can Dance...

"Youth" finds Brendan Perry and Lisa Gerrard stepping up the tempo in for a relatively peppy jaunt through jungle percussion territory with David Sylvian on guitar. "Black Stream" features floating, ghostly-angelic Brendan-synth with Lisa's haunting vocals. Both are worth the price of the album if you are a die hard DCD fan. Other memorable tracks include "First Evening," where the low, smoky, sexy voice of John Cale combines with whining, ethereal guitars, and "Amdyaz," which gives us a taste for **Khaled**'s Middle Eastern vocals, the kind of stuff you'd expect to hear on Channel 18, late at night. Much of the rest is dark cafe music with spoken poems. Both Dominique Dalcan and Barbara Gogan have the perfect vocals to go with Ryuichi Sakamoto's brilliant piano tinkling. Oh, did I mention that there's also a hip, dancey number with **Gerrard Depardieu** singing? 5 lilies — pm

We aren't the only zine out there, of course. There are lots of indie zines covering a whole range of music from ethereal to gothic to grunge. If you have a zine, we'd like to trade copies with you. If you know of some intersting zines, let us know about them (or let them know about us). At any rate, here's a list of some interesting zines that you might enjoy (zines prices have been omitted, in case they have changed recently):

Isolation
Black/White, bi-monthly, 28 letter pages.
Gothic album reviews and interviews. A bit of poetry. Movie reviews. Biting and funny at times.
P.O. Box 9458 Fresno, CA 93792-9458

Mute on the Floor
B/W, bi-monthly, 56 letter pages. FREE! (yep, it's free)
A lot of everything. Album reviews, interviews and several special columns. Almost every band under the sun is reviewed, but there is a definite slant towards the alternative scene. One of the reviewers is especially fond of 4AD and the ethereal.
P.O. Box 41648 Santa Barbara, CA 93140-1648

Throttle
B/W, bi-monthly, 28 letter pages.
Equal shares of fashion, music and cultural reviews. The Washington D.C./Virginia music scene is the emphasis here, and all the reviews are of demos and independent releases.
P.O. Box 250 Richmond, VA 23202-0250

Muppet Voice
B/W, 24 A4 pages (a little larger than letter size).
Movie reviews, miscellaneous alternative (and obscure) album reviews. A good amount of local Scotland groups. Includes an awful lot of photocopied art and illustration.
5 South Clerk Street, Flat 2FL, Edinburgh. EH89JD. Scotland

bobby is fred
B/W, bi-monthly, 8 skinny letter pages
A new zine by local Word of Mouth indie label. Interviews with punk and fringe alternative bands (he has some good interview questions). This is the first issue, so the format and lack of album reviews may change.
Word of Mouth, P.O. Box 25656 Los Angeles, CA 90025

In Remembrance
B/W, 20 half-letter pages (with card stock cover)
Graphically, a very pleasing publication. About 90% poetry and 10% reviews. The layout is beautiful.
P.O. Box 1168-584, Studio City, CA 91604

Delicate Cutters
B/W, randomly published, 16 half-letter pages
A 4AD zine in the Ray Gun style. Lots of 1-page reviews of 4AD material. This was their first issue, so the format may have changed.
3249 Carlisle #151, Dallas, TX 75204

Aenone

Saints and Razors/ Gaze/Celestia/Going Nowhere (EP)

kokopop

"Saints and Razors" is something like happy 60's pop: sun-shining vocals and harmonies and a lilting melody. A constant barrage of guitar fuzz makes me happy and I start humming uncontrollably. A more languid and prettier feel comes from "Gaze," which has that same buzzing background. Very nice! "Celestia" isn't nearly as good, more like a generic British Invasion throwback, plus it's minor keyed, while "Going Nowhere" actually does get somewhere, sounding like some of the last recorded **Field Mice** material. Overall, a good effort. 7 lilies — bn

Imagine hearing the heavenly jangling of **Cocteau** *Victorialand* guitars, but they quickly dive into a **My Bloody Valentine** noise-shimmer. Imagine a lead vocalist that sounds like **Erasure**'s Andy Bell, but without the vasectomy. Imagine a ***highly*** danceable beat that is somewhere between **Unrest** and **Hüsker Dü**. Imagine all this being produced by **Kramer** (god of Shimmy Disc).

"Saints & Razors" starts off the EP with excellent, fast-paced jangle/noise/grunge-lite mixed with the high-pitched voice of Craig Sterns. Also, throw on several intense moments of grunjangle that will simply blow you away! "Gaze" begins much slower and more ethereal, but a large part of that is due to Craig's ability to sound just like a depressed, drowsy Andy Bell on a rainy day. Another awesome track. "Celestia" gets faster and fuzzier, with subdued buzz-guitar and an overall sound that is like something right off of the Twins' *Garlands*! "Going Nowhere" becomes consummate Unrest buzz-jangle, with mellower vocals. I highly recommend this CD and anything else this band ever does! 10 lilies — pm

Captain Howdy

The Best Song In The World / Dino's Head (7")

Penn Jillette (of **Penn & Teller**) has broken into the music world finally. Of course, he's no stranger to the biz, having started his own record label a few years back. It was called **50,000,000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000 Watts** (give or take a few zeroes), but it never went very far. And here he is: yet another notch on Kramer's production gun. In this case, Kramer is doing all the fiddley guitar bits while Penn is free to sing to his heart's content. Unfortunately, the A-side is pathetic, but fear not! The B-side is worth 50,000,000,000,000 times the price of the record. It's eight minutes of Penn rambling on and on about how he got to use Dean Martin's gold showerhead once while he was in Vegas. It is perhaps the funniest thing you will ever witness in your entire life. And in the odd crossover file, Penn was overjoyed with my **Negativland** "Christianity is Stupid" t-shirt when I met him on their latest college tour. Penn is and always will be my god (now if only we could get him to say, "You're reading Dewdrops... ta dah!"). 9 lilies — pm

Shimmy producer Kramer and Penn Gillette from **Penn & Teller** and Comedy Central together at last. "The Best Song In The World" isn't, but I think it's supposed to be a parody. The b-side is really the reason to buy this single. Penn Gillette rants and raves as only he can about the first time Penn & Teller played Las Vegas. Parts are pretty funny and it gets surreal at the end. I still haven't figured out what he's talking about. 6 lilies — bn

Cocteau Twins

Bluebeard (CD single)

fontana

If you already know and love the Cocteau Twins, then you already have this single. And if you're a newcomer, then read on. The two new songs here, "Three Swept" and "Ice-pulse" are among the best they have recorded in years, more satisfying than much of *Four Calendar Cafe*. Yep, with this they've completely restored my faith, and even the album is sounding a lot better these days. The melodies are gorgeous and soaring, the definition of love. Track 4, "Bluebeard (acoustic version)" isn't so much an acoustic remake as a complete reinterpretation of the original. 10 lilies — bn

Wow. Not that you would ever ***not*** buy a Cocteau single for the B-sides, but it still needs to be said that this is a "must buy." Perhaps that last chance to hear new Liz Frazer material before she really gets stuck on this wild, new voice she's been using on the recent tour.

"Bluebeard" is really starting to grow on me. Not that I didn't love it the first time I heard it, but I usually prefer the non-single tracks on Twins albums. I guess it was hearing it on the "Tonight Show" that put it over the top for me. "Three Swept" proves that Liz can still pull out a tune now and then from her tiny back pocket that just plain melts your ears. I think she knows exactly how to send her listeners into seventh heaven when she wants to. It's full of fragile, glimmering bits of guitar and synth work that are simply to die for. "Ice-pulse" goes right back to ***Blue Bell Knoll***, helping us to remember that we all had another thing coming with the advent of that gorgeously pivotal album. Finally, the acoustic version of "Bluebeard" goes where no Liz has gone before. It is simply wonderful. Full of fibrillating, breathless angels' voices and stripped down instrumentation. 10 lilies — pm

Dandelion Fire

True Chasm/ Jealousy Hold/How Long/ Happy Now (EP)

kokopop

Dandelion Fire's name fits them perfectly. They create a pristine and luscious brand of jangley pop, all wrapped up in streams of fiery, grungey guitars and infernal drums. Their sound is simultaneously as flowery and star-dripping as it is loud and raucous. One can simply marvel at how tight and well-paced their music is.

"True Chasm" sports extremely upbeat, jangley guitars overlaid with a tinny, whining guitar solo, and given to spurts of fuzzy, furious jangle in the style of **Dif Juz**. "Jealousy Hold" gets harder and funkier, with wah-wah pedals and guitars that drift off into **Jimi Hendrix** land. "How Long" combines rambling jangle with a touch of **Mabuses**. And "Happy Now" is, well, very happy, rambling, jangley, poppy and very catchy, with bits of flangey, shimmering guitar. I guarantee, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET THIS ONE OUT OF YOUR HEAD! 9 lilies — pm

"True Chasm" really spits fire in the chorus with a cascade of grungey guitars and avalanche of drumming. The rest of the song is pretty good too. Ripping guitar pairs up with a more tuneful, almost **Dif Juz** like guitar. A good start for this New Jersey band. The downfall begins on the very next song "Jealousy Hold," which comes at you like so much generic hard rock. Instead of David Curtis, our mellifluous guitarist decides to emulate Eddie **Van Halen**, and the other guy turns on the "wwoww" effect while the vocalist does his best to annoy. The song ends with a drugged jam. "How Long" stands up much better with some **Felt** guitar finger picking, but the anthemic chorus bothers me. "Happy Now" has a hoppin' snare beat and a few more Felt references making the song cheerful. "Are you happy now?" it asks. Well, yes, but I don't think the band had anything to do with it. 5 lilies — bn

Drizzle

Salem/White Rabbit/ Never Look Back/It Was a Very Good Year (EP)

kokopop

Good thing I forgot about that horrible **Chia Pet** single, otherwise I would have probably hated this one, which

features the same vocalist, right from the start. But "Salem" is indeed worth hearing. It wallows in a dark corner but is still uplifting due to Cecilia's emotive vocals and emotional turns of melody. As a general rule, I don't like covers, and ones from the 60's are the worst. Just what the world needs, a revival of "White Rabbit." The original is kinda cool, I admit, but Drizzle takes away everything I liked. Likewise the other cover of "It Was A Very Good Year" is unnecessary, but it has a very nice arrangement and **Siouxsie** vocals. "Never Look Back" is just plain horrible, just like Chia Pet. 4 lilies — bn

Drizzle are purveyors of dark, moping grunge rock. Their glam-ish guitar work and bad-girl vocals send them deeper and deeper into that realm of sleepy drivel that came out of the early progressive scene.

"Salem" is simply a slow, **Siouxsie** ballad with a fair amount of competent jangle that is both ominous and pretty. "White Rabbit" is nothing more that a reasonably good cover of the old **Jefferson Airplane** hit. "Never Look Back" crosses whining and grungey guitar with mumbled **Chrissie Hynde** vocals. And "It Was a Very Good Year" is a nice, **Moon Seven Times** cover of the old hit. 4 lilies — pm

Lisa Germano

The Inconsiderate Bitch (EP)

4AD

Sometimes I wonder what the heck goes through Ivo's head when he decides to sign somebody to his label. I mean, can you see 4AD releasing anything like Lisa Germano in say, 1984, back-to-back with The Wolfgang Press, Cocteau Twins, and Modern English? Didn't think so. I'd be the last person to complain about what 4AD is releasing these days, and so I'll just keep looking at releases like this as something that might broaden my musical tastes. A precursor to the re-release and remix of Lisa Germano's *Happiness* album due out at the end of April, this EP takes some album tracks and lets Ivo and John Fryer fiddle with them. We'll have a review of both versions of the album in the next issue, so here I'll just describe what's on this EP. "Happiness" gets annoying real quick and could easily be paired with the **Ultra Vivid Scene** song "Blood And Thunder." It's hard and snotty mid-western blues/rock with a fiddle and not much to ingratiate itself at all. Lisa herself sings with equal parts **Suzanne Vega** and **Jane Siberry**. "Energy" luckily is a vast improvement in style. Its buoyant, folk acoustic guitar, fiddle and hand clap percussion are well done. The most outstanding one, though, is "Puppet," which takes a more rocked-out and much more catchy course, still sauntering through folky territory with a nicely hummable and every so slightly lilting melody. "Sycophant" couldn't differ more as spooky synth waves back some uninteresting blusey vocals. "(Late Night) Dresses" dumps all the frills of "You Make Me Want To Wear Dresses" and ends up as a low tech closing of this mediocre set of songs. 5 lilies — bn

If you've heard Lisa's original release of the *Happiness* album, then you will not recognize these remixes from the 4AD version of the album. Although we will be reviewing the two versions of the actual album next issue (#12), this EP will give you and idea as to what 4AD can do to an album of rock songs. They make the whole thing much more sparse and **Hugo Largo**-ish than it already was, you can taste the newly mixed-in 4AD-ness dripping from every pore. It's no big secret, I like the original mixes better! These versions are, well, imaginative.

"Happiness" would be the same song except for the extra minute of scrunged ethereality at the beginning and the extra 3 minutes of whining, spiraling guitar noise tacked onto the end. Still, it's a relatively enjoyable remix. "Energy" is a charming, **John Cougar**-ish barn dance (perhaps because she was Melloncamp's violinist...). "Puppet" is full of powerful strumming and angelicness mixed with Lisa's sarcastic voice. "Sycophant" begins with an extra minute of guitar noise, leading into a ***very*** sparse and echoey version of the album track. It's not even the same song anymore. "(Late Night) Dresses" is another sparsified re-working of an album track, with the mandatory minute-length preamble of quiet guitar noise and little, if any, resemblance to the original. Not bad at all. I just happen to like the non-4AD album better. 5 lilies —pm

Grenadine

Don't Forget The Halo (7")

Teen Beat

Grenadine remain masters of the 60s lounge act. Jenny's whispery angel-voice walks beside the speedy jangle of Mark's Unrest guitars. Rob's drums shuffle along in the background, completing the trio's peppy, retro style. "Don't Forget the Halo" is so utterly charming that you'll swear it was written in 1961. But are you ready for the real excitement? "777" takes us for a flip-side, rocket ship ride instrumental that goes on for several minutes and never once looks back as it transmogrifies itself through several godhead shades of ramble, jangle, grunge-lite, float/slam, firey, sparkling pop and head blowing speed-guitar-inferno. If you don't call this the best instrumental you've heard in 94, then you need to have your head checked. 10 lilies — pm

The latest offering from Jenny, Mark, and Rob is this 7" in clear vinyl and see-through red plastic sleeve (see also #8). Both "Don't Forget The Halo" and "777" have the characteristic chime-strum of Mr. Robinson's guitar, and both are rather slow, with sections where they wake up a little and rock out. "Halo" has some nice Jenny-voice and the whole tune is pretty but kinda dull. "777" is a simple pattern repeated many times and it gets thrashy at the end. It sounds more like Unrest. It's not a bad single and it sounds good, but I won't be satisfied until they release another great album which I hear is in the works in Warren Defever's basement! 7 lilies — bn

Hover

My Tea Is Gone (EP)

CLUB

There's no reason why Hover shouldn't be on every turntable in every single person's house in the world. They are simply that great.

With ***My Tea is Gone***, Hover have taken the pure essence of the term "kick some butt" and applied it to the musical realm of jangling guitars and rock-steady drums. Jan Tofferi and Nick Nichols have distilled their chorused voices down to nothing less than an art form. It's likely that one or the other voice might die if it were alone for even one song. Seriously, if you're looking for one band to sink all you hard earned corporate bucks into, then Hover deserves it.

"The World Within" pays homage to the Gods of Jangle with startling, rambling blissfulness and Jan's crystal clear voice (apparently the world ***doesn't*** end if she does a song alone). "On My Way" hits the ground running and never looks back as it slams its super-fast guitar maelstrom into a fiery drum line with reckless abandon. "Wondering & Waiting" starts off with Nick's quiet musings and really has you thinking there was at least one mellow song inside Hover before it all of a sudden bursts into pure, rambling exuberance in the likeness of Jan Tofferi, queen of the "knock me down with a feather, I'm in heaven" voice. "Nestle" finds Nick and Jan alternating between **Who**-like crooning and **Sundays** sweetness. Finally, there is the show-stopping "Secret Agent Man." Unfortunately, Hover doesn't do anything new to this godfather of punk anthems, so I was a tiny bit depressed and had to knock them one point. 9 lilies — pm

You might recall that we were rather pleased with ***thinsilverhorizon*** in the last issue. Well, this one is even better. It's a 5-song EP with my favorite song of the year so far as the first track. "The World Within" (also released as a split single, available from the band) has some wonderfully melliflu-

ous vocals from Jan and it's not hard at all to imagine Maurice Deebank from **Felt** playing Bob's fun guitar melody. It's an extremely well written song with some great changes and bridges. "On My Way" combines traded vocals of Jan and Bob and a jumpy rhythm with noisier guitar. "Wondering & Waiting" begins slow and nice with Bob, and then really shines as some lilting **Field Mice** guitar melody and a couple cymbal hits welcome Jan back. Wonderful and memorable. "Nestle" is a good harder number with a cool lift-off progression of chords followed by both vocalists. Finally there's a cover of the "Secret Agent" theme song sung by either Nick or Brad. Corny and cool. If you like indie-pop, Hover is without a doubt a band you should hear and watch. (Tapes are available from the band at the address on page 12.) 10 lilies — bn

Indian Bingo

(6-song EP) Rockville

As begun on their previous release, Indian Bingo have remained in somewhat typical rockin territory with this 5-track CD. You know the story: sometimes–wailing electric guitar with all the trappings. The best are "Dear Henry," an amiable gutsy romp which recalls what made *Scatological* exceptional; and "Dream Away," a Sinatra cover, and the place where Mike Boul really shows how good a vocalist he is. I've never heard the original, but I'll bet it didn't have the grungey finish (a nice touch!) that this version has. As far as the other songs go, I can't really recommend this disc very strongly, but I'm sure Pat will. 5 lilies — bn

Mike Boul is back, sad lyrics in tow, and it seems as if the harder edge is here to stay. Gone are the days of jangle that we loved on *Scatological*, but, just the same, Indian Bingo's new sound is equally enticing. Grunge, synchopation and feedback play a large part in this new incarnation, making Bingo as marvellous as usual.

"Michigan" presents the new, harder edge of Indian Bingo, where angry lyrics collide with fiery grunge. "Try" is the patented Bingo sad track. Trolling for tears and sinking to the bottom of his beer glass, Mike drudges up a believably morose tone of voice while bandmembers Phil Carney and Bill Boyle stir their whining and wistful guitars into the mix. I'm serious, this is the kind of sound that really dives into the part of you that knows music is supposed to make you *feel* something. Indian Bingo has suceeded where no other band but the **Red House Painters** has. **Morissey** & **Depeche Mode** only wish they were this genuinely poignant. "Dear Henry" is as close to the *Scatological* speed-jangle that Bingo comes anymore, with heavy-handed guitar grunge and half-yelling galore. "Dream Away" is a cover of some old lounge room standard (actually written by P. Williams, which might be Paul Williams, who knows...). This track is mostly elevator music, ecxept for the whining guitar finale, something I have come to expect on all the best Indian Bingo songs. Then "Calls a Phone Booth" comes in with low-string fuzz-grunge that drives the bottom end of the last track, giving Mike ample room for some more of his half-yelled blues. Indian Bingo still pack more genuine feeling into their music than any other dozen bands you can name. 9 lilies — pm

Lotion

Tear/Chrome Pkg./ 22+/Really Drunk (EP) kokopop

"Tear" is good sounding, aggressive and engaging noisy-rock with a **Michael Stipe** vocalist that harmonizes nicely. Also pleasing is "Chrome Pkg." which is best described as more of the same with a toe-tapping bent. "22+," the best one yet, begins with a manic pounding that reoccurs in this great ramble of a song. Finally "Really Drunk" suddenly bursts shortly into the track into some wild guitar wrenching and drumming. Later it turns into a maelstrom you've got to grin at widely. Yes, this is a good single, and is the one I'd recommend most from the recent batch of Kokopop stuff. 8 lilies — bn

Lotion's second Kokopop EP not only kicks butt, it does so gracefully. They mix grungey guitars and pounding drums together with harmonious vocals to create very catchy, slam-happy rock. Fast and furious, relentless and invigorating, New York's Lotion gives you the impression of a bunch of guys who really want to trash their instruments at the end of each song, but can't bring themselves to destroy the thing they love.

"Tear" combines wistful crooning and guitar frenzy that sounds, dare I say, ***better*** than Bob Mould's **Sugar**, but softer and with guitars that perfectly define what we mean by grunjangle. "Chrome Pkg." is a fast and harmonious **Unrest**-style song that borders on pure **Pearl Jam**-ness. "22+" features more of the Sugar-ey grunjangle, as well as moments of faux-sentimental mellowness. And "Really Drunk" explodes with a harder, faster, punkier fury than most "hard" bands are capable of. Risk at your own enjoyment, but please, risk a copy of Lotion. 9 lilies — pm

Scenic

The Kelso Run/East Mohave Shuffle/ Down Black Canyon Road (7") ipr

Like a runaway freight train heading for an old west ghost town full of black-lipsticked desperadoes, Scenic churn out a rusty, dusty, rough and tumble trio of harmonica strewn instrumentals. **Ennio Morricone** himself would move to Scenic-ville if this was the type of music that rolled down the empty streets with the dead tumbleweeds. In the land of music that has the power to transport you to another time and place by just listening, Scenic are kings. They have obviously taken a lesson from **Bela Fleck and the Flecktones**, whose harmonica-laden albums dredge up a world of ghostly scenery and wild, western countrysides with the drop of a hat.

"The Kelso Run" streams through town like an out-of-control locomotive whose passengers are all playing jangley guitars and surfer joe drum sets. "East Mojave Shuffle" gives one the feeling of standing in the desert, waiting for Big Bad Jake to hang by the neck, musically speaking. And then there's "Down Black Canyon Road," which plays like a tribal, **Dif Juz**'s soundtrack for **"The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly."** Now I know the power of the harmonica. 10 lilies — pm

Wow! This preview of their upcoming album leaves me hungry for more. Especially when the first song "The Kelso Run" explodes on the scene with urgent guitar and drums. A few breaks in tempo filled with wailing mouth organ follow, creating a truly remarkable instrumental. What comes next slows down the pace for some moodier pieces that would work well in some classic Western movie. Ennio Morricone would love it. It's going to be one hell of an album if this single is any clue. 9 lilies — bn

St. Christopher

Cathedral High/Stab/ Here Comes the Past/ A Ma Bewitched (7")

This old Slumberland single includes four live radio versions of songs from the *Man, I Could Scream* album. These show that Glenn Melia and the boys really can recreate their special vibrant sound outside the studio. The ending instrumental sections of "Past" and "Bewitched" are classic moments. More people should know about this band, and I'm now dying to see them perform. 9 lilies — bn

If you've ever wondered where we got the term "jangle" from, the answer is St. Christopher. As soon as we heard our first song by this brilliant ex-Sarah label band, the term "jangle" immediately popped to mind. Glenn Melia is the king of poppy, rambling guitars and his voice is a beacon for all crooners to follow. If you think **Unrest** was just a bit too rock-ish and **Let's Active** gave up too soon, then this is the band you want.

The live versions of "Cathedral High," "Stab," "Here Comes the Past" and "A Man Bewitched" on this EP will make you want to fly great distances just to witness one of their concerts. They masterfully retain all the snappiness and activity that personifies their recordings. I only wish other bands could be this energized on their tours. 10 lilies — pm

Tiny Lights
I Just Want to Go Away/Pull It Together (7")
kokopop

Lazy, slow, quiet jangling and harmonica/violins support the fragile voice of Donna Croughn which blankets the **Hugo Largo**-ish arrangement with a hushed, hazy sheen.

Her vocals on "I think I Just Want to Go Away" border on those of **Heidi Berry**, but maintain more of an angelic quality. "Pull it Together" lets guitarist John Hamilton's vocals blend in with Donna's as the band heads towards the poppier/peppier end of the spectrum. Definitely worth more attention. 7 lilies — pm

Tiny Lights make average folk-rock music sung by a charming female vocalist. Both songs are attractive, but not too special. "Pull It Together" is prettier, with some nice violin, while the A-side leans more toward rock. 6 lilies – bn

Unrest
Cath Carroll (CD Single)
4AD

Put another check in the "Unrest was weird" category. Too bad we have to use the past tense when talking about Unrest now, 'cause they were one of the Great New Bands of the nineties. This is probably the last thing they did before breaking up and it perfectly demonstrates their peculiar brand of whackiness. Extra long tracks, bizarre noises and everything under the sun.

"Cath Carroll" is still one of the fastest and jangliest Unrest songs ever. Plus, the "10 cc mix" has an extra 4 minutes of strangeness: a concoction of weird noises if ever there was one, complete with laughing samples, squeaking sounds, micro-snippets of the chorus and general zaniness. "VIBE OUT!" helps prove that whenever Bridget sings, it's guaranteed to be a gem. "Goodbye" gets back to the nifty, hummable, crispy-jangley Unrest and ends up sounding like a 70s lounge room ballad. The fourth track, "Hydro" is odd indeed. Just when you think it's over, it goes on for another 30 minutes (33 minutes-23.3 seconds, to be exact!) of long and drawn out guitaring. It's amazing anybody's arm doesn't just fall off from pure exhaustion, but musically it's your typical Unrest jangle, jangle, shuffle, cymbal, jangle jangle instrumental. One chord, 33 minutes: deal with it! 7 lilies — pm

PS. The promotional import CD for "Cath Carroll" has all different songs. A radio edit of "Cath Carroll," acoustic versions of both "Cath" and "So Sick" that get really stripped down, a version of "Hydro" that is 9.3 seconds shorter, and "Where Are All Those Puerto Rican Boys," a stomping, sluggish instrumental. Worth 4 lilies, if you could find it.

The final release by Unrest includes two extended versions of previously released songs: "Cath Carroll" from *Perfect Teeth* (see #10) and "Vibe Out" from a Teen Beat single. The extension of "Cath" comes across as new song tacked onto the end, an instrumental jam that shows another side of the band rather different from the album. It's exceptionally sinister from Bridget's cool bass line and a cacophony of other sounds. "Vibe Out!" sounds nice and sweet, and ends in another drawn out, repetitive jam of low range guitar. The new song "Goodbye" is a neat little ditty sung by Phil that will please fans of *Perfect Teeth*. Then there's "hydro" by far the longest single song ever released by 4AD at over 33 minutes. Given the band's tendencies for quirkiness and in-jokes I'm surprised Mark didn't stretch this song out to exactly 33 1/3 minutes. Like before, it's a long (I mean *long*) instrumental 'let's keep playing until we drop' session. Well, it's OK, but it does drag with not enough of a melody to keep it very interesting for such a length. 6 lilies — bn

Wade
Barely Human/ Encyclopedia (7")
SPIRIT

After strong recommendations from Melody Maker and **Orange**, I had to check out this (debut?) 7". "Barely Human" is a good, energetic popsong with an odd beat here and there (I like stuff like that) and a female vocalist. However "Encyclopedia" is plain, boring and long, so it's hard to tell what the band's style really is. The A-side is strong enough that I'd look for more by them. 7 lilies — bn

Wade has perfected the melodic undertone that makes Bob Mould's **Sugar** such a joy to experience. The vocalist's (no info is provided on the sleeve) voice digs deep and packs a fallen-angelic punch while the guitars dredge up a fierce wall of grungey soul that makes you weep it's so good. "Barely Human" shows exactly how much promise this band has with its driving, scrungey guitars and fire maiden vocals. But it's the B-side, "Encyclopedia," that gives Wade its *uncommon* quality. **Hugo Largo** violins and a more **Lisa Germano**-ish voice, combined with gentle, jangley guitars and a leisurely rhythm give this track the un-harshness that makes a song truly great. Wade is definitely one to look out for. 8 lilies — pm

Address List of Bands and Record Labels

4AD,p.o. box 461599,Los Angeles, CA 90069

American Recordings, 3500 W. Olive, Burbank, CA 91505-4628

CherryDisc Record Co., PO Box 313, Boston, MA 02258

Club Fub Records, 150 East Ave., Burlington, VT 05401

Crammed Mail Order, 341 Lafayette St., Suite 167, New York, NY 10012

Guernica, 15 Alma Road, London, SW18 1AA, England

Hyperium, Postfach 100561, D-91195 Lauf, Germany

Independent Project Records, Box 1033, Sedona, AZ 86336

Kokopop, 33 34th St., 6th floor, Brooklyn, NY 11232

March Records, PO Box 578396, Chicago, IL 60657

Primitech Records, 3501 California St., Suite 204, San Francisco, CA 94118

Projekt, p.o. box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591

Rockville Records, 150 W. 28th St., Room 510, New York, NY 10001

Scat Records, 5466 Broadway #200, Cleveland, OH 44127

Shimmy Disc, JAF Box 1187, New York, NY 10116

Slumberland Records, PO Box 14731, Berkeley, CA 94701-4731

Spirit Music Industries, po box 170195, San Francisco, CA 94117

Taang! Records, PO Box 51, Auburndale, MA 02166

Teen Beat, p.o. box 50373, Washington, DC 20091

Too Pure, PO Box 1944, London, NW 10 5PJ, England

Good For What It Is

This is the genesis of a new section in which we will review releases by bands that, while not uncommon, are still "good for what they are."

Letters To Cleo

Aurora Gory Alice

Sounding very much like **Juliana Hathield**, Kay Hanley of Letters to Cleo strides down the beaten path of MTV/college rock where many have gone before. Yet, somehow, she manages to make good old feisty-rock listenable again. Once you've had your fill of **Belly** and **Mary's Danish,** then it's time to rediscover the heart and soul of post-teen spunk-n-roll. There's plenty of jangling guitars and genuine East Coast female vocals for everyone. On tracks like "Rim Shak," Kay takes on a harsher, early **Kristin Hersh** voice, while "Wasted" gets into the sweeter, **Cranberries** vocal range (with a touch of Jenny Toomey of **Tsunami**). Cherry Disc Records (pm)

Tinfed

Synaptic Hardware

Tinfed are launching an all-out assault on your senses and their chief weapons are: grinding, crunching, whining guitars, groaned and grunted **Skinny Puppy** vocals, driving, battered **Front 242** drums, long and malevolent vocalizations, and a harsh **Nine Inch Nails** intensity. To top it off, the last track features a blatant sample of Toni Halliday voice from Curve's "Horror Head" single. Batten the hatches and welcome Tinfed to the thrashing doom hall of fame, 'cause they're the best damn hardcore sound I've heard since Skinny Puppy went mellow. ***Primitech Records*** (pm)

MDID

Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind

Why the hell do I like this album so much? After all, it's not the kind of thing usually reviewed in Dewdrops. Nothing ethereal of blissful here at all. Rather MDID is rooted solidly in a harsher, more metallic rock realm. But for some reason, I find a significant amount to enjoy here. Definitely a change of pace. The opener is an instrumental that first introduces the widespread use of bassy electric guitar with a high end, static like fuzz of distortion. "She's In Love" sounds exactly like **Bill Nelson**'s first album filtered through **Husker Du**, specifically the song "Living In My Limousine" with similar short phrases of lyrics and guitar riffs repeated often. Mark Edwards' easily recognizable vocals even share that same odd, novel quality that Bill Nelson has. "Legacy"s intensity never lets up, with a manic, head-on train coming at you kind of sound. Maybe it's the fact that most everything is quite melodic, and not just a bunch of lead guitar flailing and wankery. This is especially shown by "Razor Strap" and "The Prisoner," the latter being accessible enough that it ought to have widespread appeal if it were being played anywhere. The term "melodic grunge" just came to me. And it fits. *Scat Records (bn)*

The Charthogs

"The Charthogs" EP

Some of the best damn hard garage rock I've heard in years. Pure grit, straightforward wall of sound and very catchy. The lead tracks, "Nearly Human" and "Ridicule" are supremely tight, powerhouse numbers while "Baby Talk" and "Mr. Soul" just plain kick some butt. There's even a surprising nod to **Ultra Vivid Scene**'s smoky guitar work on the EP's last track, "Clean Me." ***(label unknown)*** (pm)

Borgia Popes

Jack

The Borgia Popes have managed to create an intoxicating assault on the ears that leaves lingering after-effects in the vein of **Bauhaus**. Their compositions are self-contained pools of fuzz-toned darkness. Their flanged and distorted guitars drip with a gothic evilness that owes a little bit to **Xymox** and a lot to **Shriekback**. Amazingly produced, ***Jack*** just barely avoids that precipice of pretension that so many black-clothed musicians fall over the edge of. If these guys can sound this good without major production, then I shudder to think of how awesome they will sound when they get signed, as I'm sure they will soon enough. ***(self released)*** (pm)

Compilations

no rating system
single review of each song

Heavenly Voices

This is an all-female compilation put out by Hyperium, a German label that is focusing on dark, ethereal bands. They do deal with several very good bands that have male vocalists (see the review of the Hyperium Sampler, issue #10), but as you can easily tell on this 2 disc, 37-track set, they love female vocals. Keep your ears on this label, because, once again, there is not one bad track on this *double* cd!

DISC 1

RISE AND FALL OF A DECADE — Grand and dazzling piano chords are overlapped by crystal-perfect female vocals! This is some of the most amazing stuff to come our way in a long time!

THE MOON 7 TIMES — Haunting, super-slow jangle and quiet vocals.

STOA — Swirling synth and animated percussion with erily beautiful vocals (this is the same track that was featured on the Hyperium sampler).

LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS — Spacey, reverbed guitars and double-chorused vocals: if you haven't heard LSD yet, then you really, really ought to!

CHANDEEN — A very full-bodied, gentle maelstrom of synth clarinets and strings that builds up to a relatively danceable main section, and then slips back into piano droning that is very reminiscent of **Propaganda.** And all the while we are treated to magnificent vocals!

EVENTIDE — Lively Middle Eastern music topped off with a cold, operatic, vibrato voice.

GITANE DEMONE — Maudlin lounge singing and super-sparse piano.

SPEAKING SILENCE — This track is a bit faster than the others and sports two gorgeous female voices, one low and one high. the low one is soft and relaxing while the high one warbles and trills to some previously unheard, orgasmic heights. The music is tinny, starry guitar, gothic drums and piano (something close to early **Cocteau Twins)**.

ORDO EQUITUM SOLIS — Folksy, semi-jangled guitar and double-chorused voices.

BLACK ROSE — An incredibly slow sea of synth with a wailing, Middle Eastern voice spread langorously over the top.

IT'S A SECRET — Pretty female vocals and harpsichord follow a dreadful, pseudo-*rap* intro, which unfortunately recurrs later on in the song.

DIE FORM — Forthright and operatic voices over a backdrop of electronic mush.

MANIC P. — Plucked strings, synths, synchopated percussion and high-pitched madrigality.

JACK OR JIVE — Far from being jive *or* jack, this track leaves the others behind as far as the vocals go. Chako has a voice that is paralleled by none. It is both piercingly beautiful *and* stunningly angelic. The synthetic strings and percision add a powerful counterpoint to her voice. Nothing short of stunning!

SABOTAGE-QU' EST-QU C'EST — Rather electronic and kind of dancey, with vocals that are slightly **Propaganda**-ish.

MELLONTA TAUTA — Strummed guitars, cello, electronic strings and pretty vocals.

ATTRITION — Electronic tinkering and ghostly singing.

MALKA SPIGEL — Shuffling drums, eerie synths and barely audible, whispering vocals: kind of funky!

ANNABELL'S GARDEN — Piano, congas and low synth, with mid-angelic humming and a slow, but constant, crescendo.

DISC 2

LOVE IS COLDER THAN DEATH — Pretty harpsichord + **Dead Can Dance** percussion + gorgeous female vocals = godhead!

COLLECTION D'ARNELL-ANDREA — The vocals are very Middle Eastern, with lots of frantic, electronic strings and fuzzy guitars. It's hard to believe that this is Collection D'Arnell Andrea!

24 HOURS (Dark Orange) — Hip, percussioney synthwork and gorgeous vocals.

IN THE NURSERY — Slow, orchestral soundtrackian music with occasional, ethereal voices.

BLACK TAPE FOR BLUE GIRL — Slow and flowing synth with dark, female vocals.

PUPILLA — Some Middle Eastern influences, but also an equal amount of madrigality and plenty of percussion.

SLEEPING DOGS WAKE — Delicate, tiny Italian guitars sparkle while double-chorused voices croon almost subliminally.

SUNWHEEL — Awesome drizzly, atmospheric guitar a-la mid-80s **Cocteau Twins.**

KIRLIAN CAMERA — Sounds like some sort of ancient ballad.

DONNA REGINA — Simple and mesmerizing vocals and that guitar effect from the gods: wavertone!

ANCHORAGE — Grand, yet subdued, orchestral music, drenched in madrigal beauty.

TARAS BULBA — Middle Eastern female vocals surrounded by similarly Eastern percussion and beautiful synths.

BEL AM — Double-chorused vocals, very crisp, over muffled keyboards.

DREAMSCAPE — Mmmm! Lively percussion, damn fine jangle, and gorgeous female vocals to boot! This is the missing link between Teen Beat and Projekt records.

KOSOVA REPUBLIKE — Very pretty vocals and very sedate guitar stirrings that soon transform into a backdrop of grunge!

VIEW — Plenty of harpsichord and beautiful, triple-chorused madrigal voices blended to form an altogether better sound than you have ever heard!

ELEVEN SHADOWS — Ominous, operatic singing in German, with flowing synths and a very famous sound byte smacked on top: that speech from some lawyer about what it was like for Rodney King to be hit 56 times in 81 seconds. It would be touching stuff if that whole travesty of the legal system wasn't such a bad memory already. But no one will deny that this juxtaposition of gothic crooning, flowing synth and brutal reality is a powerful piece of music!

ANDROMEDA COMPLEX — Simple guitar picking, slow synths and a soft, female spoken voice.

The Promises Of Silence — *projekt*

Caution! If you're prone to falling asleep while driving, this is not a tape that should get anywhere near your car! The title of this compilation is a good one: all of the songs are so slight that they continually promise to fade away into nothingness. This isn't to ridicule them or say they're bad or anything. The music would be ideal for stargazing on an empty mountain top, watching the latest meteor shower with a close companion and a glass of Talisker. There it would mix with the sombre beauty of the night sky. But for everyday listening it does tend to drag.

HYBRYDS — Low, clanking, sampled percussion, growling synth, **Philip Glass** piano and sparse, angelic voices.

DJEN AJAKAN SHEAN — Rather like the opening stirrings of the old Star Trek theme with a loud clanging of Tibetan bells and someone playing with sandpaper.

STEVE ROACH — New Age synth and miscellaneous nature samples.

VIDNA OBMANA — Sparse, spacey synthwork and automated tribal drums, a combination that is somewhat hypnotising.

JEFF GREINKE — A 23 BPM piano solo.

ART OF PRIMITIVE SOUND — This band attempts to create performance noise with little more than a paper cup and a stage floor.

ORA — The most interesting thing I've heard yet: nuts and bolts and bits of metallic junk being rustled against a microphone. This is the *ultimate* stereo headphone test. Primo head trip stuff!

ALIO DIE — Much like ORA, this group achieves a similar state of atmospheric gaffing with dripping water and a crunched up wad of paper. In a word: odd, odd, odd, odd, odd!

ROBERT RICH — A deep, distant, thundering, sporadic beating of drums combined with eerie horror synthesizer.

SAFFRON WOOD — The "2001: A Space Odyssey" obelisk music ("Also Sprach Zarathusra") as done by **Kraftwerk** and Alan Wilder's **Recoil.**

BLACK TAPE FOR A BLUE GIRL — Moaning and synths and mumbling, oh my!

TEMPS PERDU? — Sedated synthetic washes and occasional female whale-like singing.

ASHLEY/STORY — The next best thing to **Harold Budd**: starry synths over a spattering of grand piano and baby cries. Eerie yet beautiful.

Chris Bigg

At the 13 Year Itch celebration last July (which we promise a feature on soon!) one of the many people I had a chance to meet was Chris Bigg whose artwork and calligraphy have enriched the design of many a 4AD release. Perhaps it wasn't the best idea to interview him in the hallway of the ICA, Chris being rather distracted, and in retrospect listening to the tape again it was obvious I shouldn't have kept him as long as I did (only about ten minutes anyway, sorry Chris!); but we did manage to uncover a few facts.

Dewdrops: What was your first 4AD project?

Chris Bigg: The first one real big time was The Wolfgang Press's *Bird Wood Cage*. That album and "Raintime" and "Kansas" singles. That was the first one I did on my own, really. I worked with Vaughan on other things, but that was the first one I actually personally did and put my name to.

So it was your idea to put a toilet on the cover?

That The Wolfgang Press... we worked together on their sleeves. They get involved to an extent where they bring the images in or we talk about the images together and actually the guitarist took that photograph and the one on the back. We had banged ideas around, but the toilet was one I thought was great and it was perfect for the title as well. For some reason "Bird Wood Cage"... I don't know why. I think it worked very, very well. I'm very happy with that one. It's one of those ones that I look at, and I saw it the other day at work and I thought 'yeah, that's great!' I think it's just odd, it's strong. Perfect for the music. That was my debut.

Before that what were you doing?

Before that I was Vaughan's assistant really I suppose. I would do artwork. and calligraphy. I did a Cocteau Twins logo and various things like that and I used to work half for Beggar's Banquet as well in the early days, seven years ago when I first started. I did an old Field Of The Nephilim sleeve and things like that, sort of part of the bargain really. And a few other things I'm embarrassed about and we won't talk about.

How did you start doing calligraphy?

That was at college. When I was at college doing graphics which was a three year course, graphic design and photography. I was bored to death with typography. I just hated it. I found it and the way it was taught really quite boring so I sort of rebelled against it a bit and started to do calligraphy. We used to have a calligraphy teacher that came in once a week to basically introduce us to the structure of typefaces, and I just got really into that. Spent the whole year doing it. There was all sorts of trouble from the course masters saying what are you doing wasting your time scribbling all the time. I just found it so exciting, just making those marks and I think it appealed a sort of fine arty side of me, you know, the illustrative, painterly sort of approach I'd like to think I've got in something. That was good and I'm really glad I've done that. I've got loads and loads of it at home and I'm just waiting for the project that is going to be compatible to use it with. I got the little bit on Heidi Berry. I thought that was good. I've got a few bits that I would love to get out. I think they're really really strong.

It looks so chaotic. Is this something you spent a lot of time on?

No. That's twenty seconds, really, just scribbling. I think there's a beauty about it even though it's very chaotic. Heidi brought in this jacket [the one on the back of the sleeve]. That was the jacket that her father had bought her as a little girl. It was a Victorian antique. She just said this is what this album feels to me. Recreate this feeling. And that was the starting point, really. This was something I'd had around for a long time, and I just though the lines and marks in it were quite good, like they reflected the torn broken lace and the general deterioration of this beautiful jacket.

What would you say has been your most challenging project with 4AD so far?

I'd have to say the Belly thing I think. Just because of the amount of it. There was so much to do. There was a vast amount, so many singles and the album, re-releases, posters, all the t-shirts– they did a lot of merchandising –it was quite an intense project. I think probably one of the biggest we've done. One of the most rewarding as well.

Why were there so many formats?

It comes done to marketing. I think "Feed The Tree" did a lot better than anyone thought, and everyone enjoyed it. "Gepetto" was only done as a little thing the first time around and then it was out of stock. So we thought why not re-release it. It was slightly re-mixed and re-jigged, and that was that. I was a bit nervous about it. I think everyone at 4AD was. It sort of smacks, stinks of a bit of a rip-off, basically, but there was a lot of people who wanted it. It was remixed, and there was a few good b-sides that hadn't been heard, so I think we just about got away with that. We're not getting too many big slanders about re-releasing it. And it was another opportunity to do something with the sleeves as well

Would you say that Vaughan is more into typography?

I think we're both into it all, really. He's good with images. That would be his strong point, whereas I tend to get involved with the logos a bit more, designing the logos, drawing the logos on. Vaughan has the vision to say, for instance, lets have a stuffed monkey with a plastic halo, things like that, or a baby with a cradle.

How long would you say it takes to finish a project from the initial idea until it's finished?

About two months - six weeks. There's always two or three going on. Ads, re-issues, back catalogue stuff, always a mountain of things to do.

We chatted about a few other things, but the distractions of that hectic week eventually got the best of us and we gave up trying to make a coherent interview. Those interested in an in-depth interview should check out Susan Curran's article in Warped Reality.

UNDERGROUND LOVERS

In an effort to clean out our backlog of interviews, we reach back to August of 1993 when the Underground Lovers opened for alternative KROQ band Adorable at the Roxy in Los Angeles. Guitarist Glenn Bennie and bassist Maurice Argiro shed some light on the Australian band and its Guernica release, Leaves Me Blind.

Are you expecting a crowd?

Well, **Adorable** will definitely draw a crowd. In fact, I think the show's sold out. We don't really expect anyone to actually know us.

Will you change the set for this performance because of the obvious KROQ crowd?

Yes, but just to fit it into 30 minutes, instead of the normal 45. We'll play some faster songs and keep it short and sharp.

Will Philippa be doing her songs from the album?

Yeah, one song, an old one. Mainly because we don't have our sampler. We didn't even get a sound check! We're basically doing the more sort of *rocking* songs.

Will it be much like the set at "13 year itch"?

It'll be much the same except for the drum machine tracks.

What did you think of 13 year itch?

It was great, we were there for 3 nights, the last three.

What was your favorite act?

The Breeders.

Who's your fave Star Trek character?

Oh, you need to speak to our lighting guy, but he's not here. We don't see much of it, but Dr. Spock was always my favorite. Oh, and the bald one.

Ilea, the one from the movie. So, we should talk to your lighting guy?

Yeah, when we were in London he'd watch the show every afternoon. That's the new Star Trek, not the old one.

I wonder if it influences his lighting?

It does, actually, it does! Definitely. Unfortunately he couldn't come with us to the U.S.

How did 4AD find out about you?

Well, Ivo actually came to Australia, and a friend of ours passed on a tape of ours to him. He listened to it and then came to see us play. We'd already recorded the album by then and he said he'd like to put it out. It was really cool because we heard that he's gotten a copy of the tape and we were excited. Then a few days later he actually rang up!

What do you think of Peter Murphy?

Well, we haven't heard much by him except for a single a couple years ago. He's the guy who sings real low, right?

You see, we have a theory that he's in every single band that there ever was.

Is he in our band? He probably is.

We've noticed that there's an incredible amount of variety on the album, Leaves Me Blind. This seems strange considering Ivo in the past has tended to sign bands that have a definite "sound" or direction.

A lot of people hate that. We caught some flak in England in a magazine where somebody said, "What's the direction?" But, to us the song's the important thing. We just do whatever it takes to make each song great and we don't focus so much on developing a "sound" for the band. With our live show, it's very obvious. We play all our different types of songs and people want to hear us just "rock out." Of course, tonight they'll just hear our "rocking" songs because it's just a half hour show, which is fine, but we really do like to play the slower songs as well. And normally our show is much more theatrical with all the slides and such. It's more like theater than rock and roll.

Was your first album like this one?

No, it was more subdued and had more of a common flow. When we did the new one, we wanted to make it a bit more "all over the place." And we had a lot more songs to put on it if we had released it ourselves, but Ivo had to cut some of them. It would have been this "double album epic."

Are there any plans to release more stuff on 4AD or Guernica?

Well, Ivo put it on Guernica because that label is just for one-offs. Even he said that he was confused as to the ultimate direction of the Underground Lovers. Our next album is already recorded, actually, and it definitely has more of an atmospheric nature to it. A lot of the hard edge is gone. It should be out in Australia in January (1994).

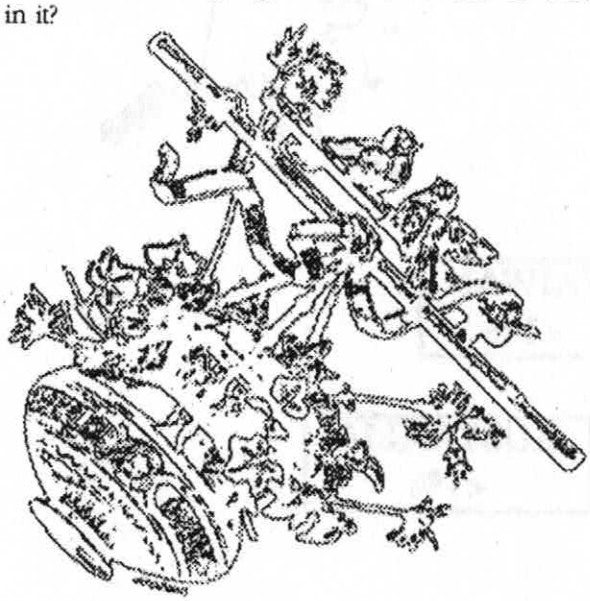
So, are you going to read your fortune cookie?

Yeah, okay... "No one will like you at the gig tonight." I know!

Musical Origins and the Wonders of College Radio

by brant

Back in 1977 when I was just barely a teenager, at the same time I was just discovering the new wonders of high school: actually having different classes in different rooms, not to mention your own textbook, and trying to get out of playing on a sports team by any means possible, I also made a new discovery in terms of radio: college radio stations. You've got to understand that prior to checking out the "other end" of the radio spectrum, I usually listened to whatever bands my friends were into, you know, Boston, AC/DC, Billy Joel, Meatloaf, Styx, ie. all the popular AOR stuff at the time that cool people listened to, or at least said they liked. Plus THE radio station to listen to (and if you didn't you were looked upon as having some kind of mutation) was The Blimp, WBLM, a fixture on the cutting edge of 'cool music.' True I had done some experiments into lesser known areas inhabited by the likes of Queen and ELO, but for the most part, what was on the radio was what I heard, period. Even earlier when my thoughts nine times out of ten did not even come close to music, the same was true, but my parents got to control the car radio and as a result I was pretty familiar with all the early 70's popular 'man on the street' stuff. I'm sure we all go through this period. Even then I could see that 'normal' radio wasn't for me. I distnctly remember asking my mom when all the new songs were going to come out because I was so tired of the all old ones I had heard innumerable times, as if there were something like 'seasons' of new songs that were released all at once. An interesting thought for a nine year old kid. But shortly after entering high school, all of that started to change. I discovered the University Of Maine radio station WMPG, which a new friend swore by, and thus I began to find my musical identity. This friend would always be talking about some band or other I had never heard of (nobody else had either) and he made it all sound so different and exciting. This college radio station was 20 or so miles from my house, broadcast at a power of 10 watts and usually couldn't even be picked up in stereo. But it didn't matter. What I heard I liked almost instantly. It usually didn't even matter what was on; this was MY radio station and MY music which nobody else even suspected was out there for the asking. It was sort of like a recent episode of The Adventures of Pete & Pete (how's that for an odd reference?!), where the shorter Pete discovers HIS song, becomes obsessed with it and will do anything to hear it again. Only I had a lot more luck than he did, since my bands did actually exist and all I had to do was turn on the radio and before long I'd hear the Clash, Adam & the Ants, Ultravox, Dead Kennedys, and so on again. I absorbed all I could and I was irrevocably hooked. It was exticing and maybe even a little dangerous; after all the Buzzcocks' "Orgasm Addict" wasn't the kind of thing you really wanted your parents to know you were listening to, right? Punk was outrageous in a fun sort of way (wow, you didn't even have to sound good at all, or even be able to sing!), and electronic music was the wave of the future, I was so sure, I mean, who even needed guitars when Thomas Dolby could create such a masterpiece album with a legion of keyboards? Speaking of albums, that's when I first began buying records that I could call my own and that I paid for myself. Nobody had heard of these records: in order of purchase they were Ultravox's Vienna, Thomas Dolby's The Golden Age Of Wireless, Duran Duran's Rio, and U2's Boy. I was a new person, musically anyway. Soon it was very easy to get caught up in all the new bands popping up, all those ones that are so fondly looked back on today as part of the "early-80's" crowd. Electropop, technopop, new wave, new romantic; the labels were almost interchangeable. Most of the bands were British and they even started to take over more normal radio stations and <gasp> even the usual cornerstone of mindless banality– the American Top-40. I was firmly entrenched in this movement of sorts throughout my late high school and college years where I also found a great radio station I could listen to in full stereo in my dorm room. As the years went by however, past favorites began to decline. Fewer new bands piqued my interest; the genreal public went back to crap consumption, sinking to even new lows; and old favorites, even though still favorites, they graced my turntable less and less. Coincidentally, upon graduating from college, I found myself experimenting in new musical areas once again. And it was with a vague interest that I picked up a Cocteau Twins single on a whim, merely because the art I had seen on their album covers had begun to make an unconscious impression on me. Those two songs from the Love's Easy Tears 7" were unlike anything I had ever heard, and I wasn't even sure I liked them very much. But after a few weeks my brain's pathways had shifted and reformed so that I was thinking in a whole new way. Once again, this was MY music; who had ever heard of the Cocteau Twins? Nobody! This stuff wasn't even played on the radio! The only mysteries were: what the heck was that girl singing, and what was that little mechanical looking logo with the "4" the "A" and the "D" in it?



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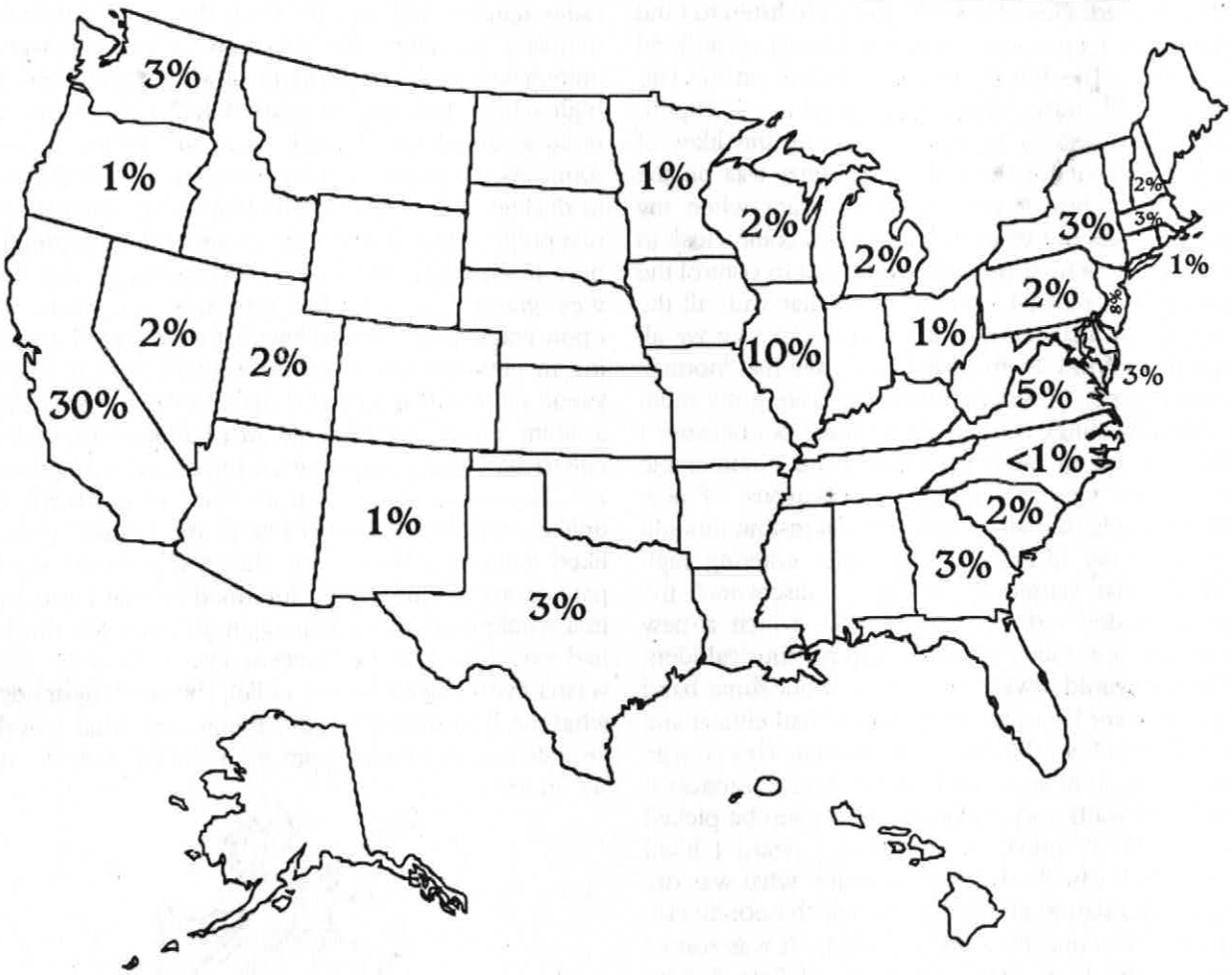

TAIWAN <1%

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